

# Down to Bedrock

M. W. Bro. Carroll M. Curtis, Grand Lodge of Kentucky

**W**e should constantly try to think of new ways to apply the teachings of Freemasonry, but we should resist attempts to change Freemasonry into something it was never intended to be. Therefore, I would submit for thoughtful consideration some matters of fundamental importance:

Ever keep in mind that only high quality and excellence is acceptable in Freemasonry.

It is of paramount importance that there be high quality in the moral standards and practices of our members; in the leadership of our officers; in the dignified and impressive conferring of our degrees and the conducting of all of our ceremonies; in the daily practice of our Masonic obligations and teachings; indeed, high quality is necessary in everything Masonic.

As Masons, we do not claim to be better than everyone else, but in order to actually be Masons, there are certain standards that we must uphold. Therefore, let us investigate thoroughly all petitioners, and then, at the ballot box, wisely use the white ball and black ball for the true good and protection of our beloved Fraternity.

In the admission of a petitioner or keeping of a member, the good name and effectiveness of Masonry is more important than an unworthy individual. If a Mason should fall into improper conduct, let us encourage him to reform, but should this fail, let him be brought to Lodge trial and expelled rather than permit the good works of the Fraternity to be impaired by his unworthiness.

There is a constant need for high quality and efficient officers and for each and every Mason to daily practice the teachings of Freemasonry.

- Recognize and maintain the supremacy of Ancient Craft Masonry.

Too often, the Master Mason who is not a member of any other Masonic organization is considered to be a second or third-rate Mason, one of inferior standing.

Let it be recognized and proclaimed by all Masons that the Master Mason Degree is the highest Degree in Masonry.

Let no one misunderstand these statements. I am not speaking against membership in other Masonic organizations. I am a member of both of the well-

known Rites, as well as other Masonic organizations, and each has added to my Masonic knowledge. What I am saying is this: Let us put first things first.

It should also be recognized that any organization requiring any or all of its members be Masons must abide by Masonic law, and their practices and procedures must not be contrary thereto.

- Resist any attempt to cheapen Freemasonry by the use of improper publicity. Indeed, Masonry has much publicity, but it is not achieved by a barrage of words.

Tooting the hon and spouting off with words, just to bring attention to ourselves, is completely out of place in Masonry.

The urge to put a Masonic sign at the edge of town, giving the time and place of meeting, just as many other organizations do, is grossly improper in Masonry. This, in the public mind, would put Masonry along the side of dozens of other organizations.

Again, I am not speaking against membership in other fine organizations. Being a member of a service club, I know that such clubs and other organizations do much good community work.

What I am saying here is: Let us keep Freemasonry what it is intended to be – Freemasonry. In a quiet and dignified manner, Masonry gets publicity – by doing, more than by saying; by practicing what we teach; by the dignified and impressive conduct of our public ceremonies.

- Resist any attempt to solicit or even suggest Masonic membership.

To ask someone to become a Mason is so highly improper that this fact ought to be deeply impressed on the mind of every Mason. We should, therefore, ward off any attempt to weaken our Fraternity by the use of this practice.

We may look around us today and find fraternal organizations that are weak and have nearly gone out of existence. Publicity campaigns and membership drives have not worked for them. So to those Masons who may have the urge to overdo Masonic publicity, or have the temptation to ask someone to petition Masonry or to even suggest it, I would ask the searching question: Why should Freemasonry depart from its proper methods that do work, and adopt methods that have failed?

- Recognize that numbers are not all that important to Freemasonry.

Much weeping and wailing has been done in regard to losses in Masonic membership. Many will explain the losses in membership in the 1930s as due to the economic depression.

When will we realize that Freemasonry and any other institution of high moral standards will also suffer during a spiritual and moral depression?

Then let us turn our attention to the problem, instead of just complaining about the symptoms.

Let us use our personal and individual influence to help those around us to raise their spiritual and moral goals.

M. W. Bro. Carroll M. Curtis  
Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Kentucky, F. & A. M.  
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